

OVERVIEW

MESA is a rapidly growing city, currently home to approximately 400,000 people. The City management is conscientious, forward-thinking, and committed to preserving and advancing the quality of life Mesans now enjoy. This commitment to thoughtful planning has taken many forms, including the initiation of a public art program overseen by the City's Museum and Cultural Advisory Board.

Long-range plans for the Public Art Program were developed by the Freeman/Whitehurst group in 1998. The plan, imagine Mesa, identified several opportunities for public art to be integrated into future capital improvements. The canal system was identified as an important cultural, historical, and aesthetic point of pride for Mesa.

The canal system is an important cultural, historical, and aesthetic point of pride for Mesa.



CONSOLIDATED CANAL AT COPPERPOINT COMPLEX

The City Parks and Transportation Divisions also recognize that the canal banks have great value for recreation and alternative transportation. Mesa is committed to developing a system of Multi-Use Paths that will follow the canal banks and take advantage of this unique cultural asset.

This Master Plan has been commissioned to research and identify public art opportunities for the pathway system. Recommendations for artworks along the pathways can be found within the report and also in the summary.

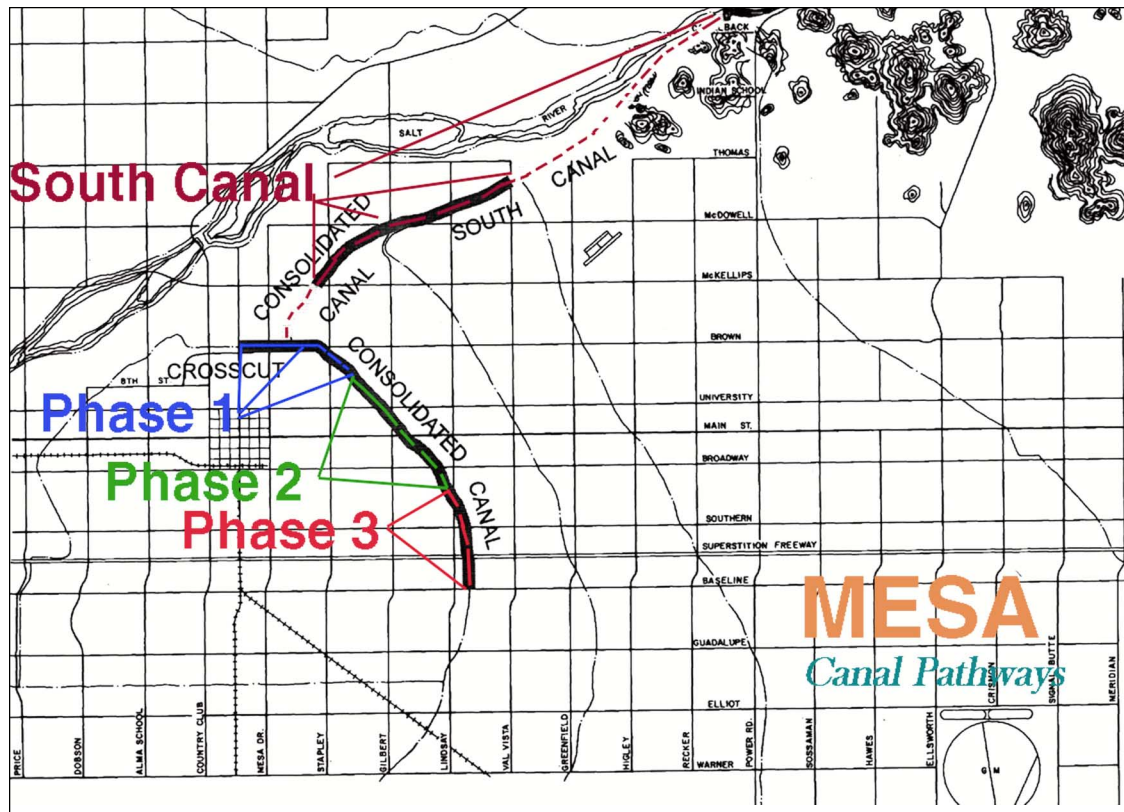
SCOPE of PLAN

The primary charge of this Art Master Plan is to identify art opportunities for the Multi-Use Paths that follow the canal banks. Emphasis will fall on the path segments that are already under design and segments that are slated for design in the near future. Construction will be complete on Phase 1A and 1B of the Consolidated Canal Pathways in spring of 2002. Phases 2 and 3 of the Consolidated

Canal, as well as the first phase of the pathway on the South Canal, are in the beginning stages of design.

The City of Mesa may choose to incorporate design recommendations developed in this report in plans for future pathways. Other recommendations can be implemented after construction is complete.

Additionally, this plan looks at the larger issues of promoting bicycle and pedestrian travel citywide. Mesa is working on several planning and transportation issues to further the path system. Design elements and initiatives that enhance the functionality of the entire path system will also bolster City identity. Future art plans may build on concepts mentioned in this plan that add to the citywide system.



Specific art recommendations can be found in the *Getting Art into the Picture* section (see page 9). Concepts that will further the success of Mesa's bicycle/pedestrian system can be found in the *Linkages* section (see page 30).

Design elements that enhance the functionality of the path system will bolster City identity.

MULTI-USE PATH

BACKGROUND

1970s

Mesa's Transportation Division began designating bikeways.

1980s

Mesa committed to developing a system of bikeways throughout the city. Mesa joined with other Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) cities to form a regional bicycle task force.

1991

The federal government passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) which authorized funding for roadways and directed states to establish funding and planning for Multi-Use Paths.

1992

The MAG bicycle task force published a regional bicycle plan.

1993

The City formed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Amenities Committee to study local bicycle issues. That Committee submitted a report to the City Transportation Committee, putting forth 24 recommendations for improving Mesa's bicycling environment.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Amenities Committee Recommendations

1. Hire a full-time bicycle/pedestrian coordinator.
2. Establish a bicycle/pedestrian advisory committee.
3. Publish bicycle safety awareness materials.
4. Develop bike safety school curriculum.
5. Develop bike rodeo (a safety course) kit.
6. Implement a bicycle registration program.
7. Establish a bicycle/pedestrian safety video library.
8. Develop, adopt, and implement a bicycle/pedestrian plan.
9. Officially adopt bicycle facilities guidelines.
10. Modify standard street cross-sections to accommodate bike lanes.
11. Increase use of detector loops at traffic signals.
12. Develop a bicycle parking ordinance.
13. Develop shower and clothes locker ordinances.
14. Develop a more intense maintenance level for bikeways.
15. Publish a bicycle facilities map.
16. Expand the existing path on the RWCD floodway.
17. Support and pursue the proposed Western Canal Pathway.
18. Work with SRP to develop pathways on the canal banks.
19. Consider recruiting corporate funding for pathways on sections of the canal.
20. Pursue state funding for the Arizona Trail in Mesa.
21. Consider using grade-separated crossing where canals cross arterial streets.
22. Provide City-budgeted funds for bikeways and programs.
23. Develop a network of contacts with organizations working on bike/ped issues.
24. Develop a citywide marketing theme to promote bicycling and walking.

MULTI-USE PATH

BACKGROUND

1997

The City's Transportation Division produced the Mesa Bicycle Plan, a document which explored needs, goals and issues pertinent to the path system. The Transportation Division solicited comments and suggestions from citizens and engineers to arrive at a specific list of recommendations, including the development of Multi-Use Paths on SRP canal embankments.

Recognizing the importance of alternative modes of transportation, the federal government has initiated several granting cycles to encourage cities and towns to develop multi-modal paths and trails. Federal funds have stimulated the development of Mesa's Multi-Use Path System. The City is now in the process of developing a network of Multi-Use Paths, recognizing that such a system would enhance the quality of life in Mesa.

1998

Mesa voters approved a quality of life tax increase that would fund several projects, including design and construction of 6.1 miles of Multi-Use Paths along the canal banks.

1999

Mesa's City Manager's Office formed an interdepartmental task force to make recommendations on how to respond to existing and future transportation issues. The Multi-Use Path Focus Group submitted a plan that would utilize the canal banks as the main arteries of the citywide path system.

2001

Mesa 2025: A Shared Vision underscores the importance of the City's park system and emphasizes the need to develop linkages between schools, parks, and other destinations.

Community connectivity and linkages are necessary to serve existing and future residents of the City through trail corridors, canals, utility corridors, and urban pathways. These linkages provide both passive and active recreation uses and areas, allowing the use of alternative transportation modes that enhance social interaction and passive leisure pursuits.

Mesa 2025: A Shared Vision



MULTI-USE PATH

PROGRESS

Mesa's Multi-Use Path System is becoming a reality.

The first completed sections of the Multi-Use Path run along the north bank of the Consolidated Canal from Center Street, approximately two miles to 8th Street.

The 10-foot-wide concrete path conforms to guidelines issued by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The Multi-Use Paths include amenities such as rest stops, dusk-to-dawn lighting, and signs at street crossings.



MULTI-USE PATH AT MESA DRIVE



PEDESTRIANS AT MESA DRIVE

Mesa's Multi-Use Path System is becoming a reality.

The Multi-Use Path system is an infrastructure that promotes:

- Connection to place and community
- Outdoor recreation
- Neighborhood communication
- Environmental awareness
- Alternative modes of transportation

COORDINATED EFFORTS

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (MAG)

MAG is the organization that coordinates and mediates many inter-city agreements and in some matters, facilitates initiatives that serve more than one municipality. Mesa is not alone in devoting resources to multi-modal paths. Cities across the Valley are simultaneously developing high-quality multi-use paths. Phoenix, Scottsdale, Glendale, Tempe, Chandler, and Gilbert are all in the process of designing and building bicycle and pedestrian paths. MAG hosts the Regional Bicycle Task Force (RBTF) and a Pedestrian Working Group (PWG) to coordinate efforts Valley-wide and to lend support to municipal grant applications. The task force is composed of transportation representatives from participating MAG cities and the Arizona Department of Transportation.

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ADOT)

ADOT participates in the administration and oversight of federal funds that are subsidizing many of the multi-use paths. Cities that are awarded federal grants to help cover the expense of these pathways work with ADOT to implement the grants. Most of the federal grants have distinct design guidelines aimed at improving air quality by promoting alternative modes of transportation.

The pathways promise to enhance the quality of life and increase connection to place .

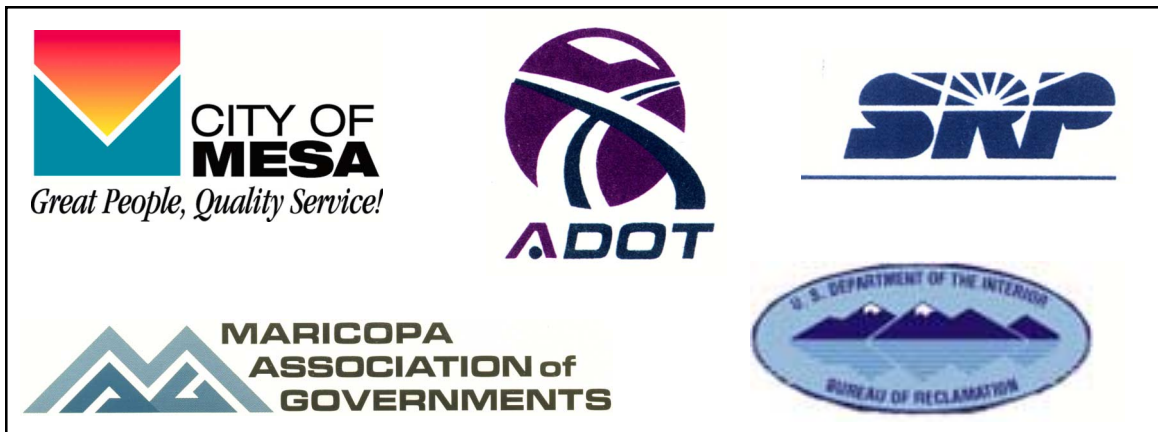
SALT RIVER PROJECT (SRP)

SRP is the utility responsible for maintaining over 100 miles of canals delivering water to Valley cities. The canal banks are recognized as ideal corridors for the various multi-modal path systems. Over the last decade, SRP has changed its view towards canal-bank usage and is now welcoming enhancements that Valley cities are proposing. The year 2003 will mark SRP's centennial anniversary. They are actively supporting initiatives that will enhance the identity of the canal system throughout the Valley.

THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

The Bureau of Reclamation is the federal agency that owns the canals and accompanying land easements. They are also interested in promoting public appreciation of the canal system. The Bureau and SRP are planning to install interpretive signage at points of interest along the canals.

All of these coordinated efforts underscore the value of Mesa's Canal Pathways. The pathways promise to enhance the quality of life and increase connection to place for Mesa residents.



CANAL LEGACY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

Mesa has a rich and varied cultural history—a story that reaches back more than a thousand years to an era when the Hohokam people lived in the Valley. The Hohokam civilization created an astounding network of canals to distribute water from the Salt River to numerous agricultural settlements. They took full advantage of Mesa's identifying topographical feature by constructing a long canal that followed the high contour of Mesa's Lehi area. Today's civil engineers marvel at the Hohokam's ability to distribute water to settlements throughout the Valley.

The Hohokam civilization created an astounding network of canals to distribute water from the Salt River to numerous agricultural settlements.



MESA GRANDE RUINS

The Hohokam people left behind far more than the canals. They also built complex settlement mounds throughout the Salt River Valley. Their pottery forms were beautiful and sophisticated.

Distinctive patterns found on Hohokam ceramics are echoed in the rock-art petroglyphs, suggesting that their artistic expressions were intertwined with their symbolic communications.



CANAL LEGACY

HISTORICAL

Mesa's historical legacy continued with western explorers, prospectors, and settlers filtering into the Valley in the latter part of the 19th century. In 1877, Mormon pioneers arrived in the Valley to settle the wild territory known as Arizona. They recruited local Pima Indians to revitalize many of the abandoned Hohokam canals and developed very productive farms and ranches in the harsh desert. Several Mormon families settled in an area still known as Lehi, and other families settled on the mesa top. The original families quickly grew and prospered, and other settlers joined the desert community. The area known as Mesa became a town of its own in 1889.

Mesa's evolving system of canals and lateral ditches continues to distribute irrigation water to residents today.

Mesa's evolving system of canals and lateral ditches continues to distribute irrigation water to residents today. Technology has advanced the efficiency and reliability of the delivery systems, but they remain an important link to our history. Mesa is committed to understanding and protecting the physical sites that underscore its rich cultural heritage.

Cities are like people... they need more than just memories... They need physical links with the past. Today, people learn more through the visual experience than through the spoken history. Tomorrow, Mesa will be defined and celebrated for its historic continuity and the preservation of its historic assets...
Historic Homes of Mesa: An Architectural and Preservation Guide; Don W Ryden Architects, May, 1996



LATERAL IRRIGATION DITCH, LEHI

GETTING ART into the PICTURE

This plan proposes a strategy to make art an integral part of the pathways and to make the canal pathways an integral part of the City. Artworks that are functional and contribute to the “usability” of the system will be encouraged, with the expectation that they will also be inventive, visually engaging, and specific to Mesa. Art elements can build on the vision of the Multi-Use Path initiative and add to the success of Mesa’s overall bicycle and pedestrian system.



Art elements for the pathways should be inventive, visually engaging, and specific to Mesa.

Recommended art features will function to:

- Enhance Mesa’s IDENTITY by calling attention to the canal system, the Multi-Use Paths, and the things that make Mesa a great place to live.
- Increase SAFETY of the path system by increasing the visibility of mid-block street crossings to motorists. Artistic interventions in the standard details of the canal crossings will heighten awareness of the canals, the path system, and the possibility of pedestrians attempting to cross the street.
- Connect to Mesa’s HISTORY by drawing on icons and images particular to Mesa’s agricultural legacy and by honoring places with historic and prehistoric distinction along the pathway.
- Create COMFORT zones along the way. The art of “placemaking” can transform points of interest into signature destinations with shade, seating, and site-specific art. Artists can respond to the specific qualities of a site to create works that prompt visitors to see, experience, and/or understand that place in a different light. This will be particularly valuable at sites that have a story to tell—a story that lends itself to more than words.
- Provide WAYFINDING along the canal pathways. The canals do not follow the City grid that most residents know and understand. Maps of the system at various locations would help to make the paths more functional and user-friendly.
- Markers that indicate direction and mileage to various parks, schools and other destinations would make pathway LINKAGES more legible and encourage residents to commute via the canal paths.

SAFETY and IDENTITY

People move through the City in different ways for different reasons. Most people travel in automobiles. A certain percentage of automobile traffic could be diverted to alternative modes of transportation. The City's challenge is to make it easy for pedestrians, bus riders, and people on bicycles to get to their destinations. The main pathways are designed to be safe, attractive, and comfortable. Designs should also provide for good access to high-volume destinations such as schools and recreation facilities.

Thirty-six miles of canals thread through the City, offering opportunities to connect to the past and present of Mesa. Gravity flow determines how the canals make their way through the City. They do not follow the logic of the streets, which form the strong north-south-east-west grid typical to western cities. The canals are the main arteries of the Multi-Use Path System. Markers that encourage residents to think of the canals as another type of transportation corridor will help people understand the path system.

Increased visibility will help reduce safety problems inherent to mid-block crossings. Light signals should be considered for high-volume street crossings near schools.

Gravity flow determines how the canals make their way through the City. They do not follow the logic of the streets.



JOGGER CROSSING MESA DRIVE

